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HomeLifeStyle

PAGE 8

The ShowStoppers perform during Chantilly High's 32nd annual Jazz & Pizzazz.

Chantilly CONNECTION

Fair Oaks ♦ Fair Lakes

Songs with Spirit and Swagger

NEWS, PAGE 3

Forest Glen Sustains \$10 Million Damage

NEWS, PAGE 2

PHOTO BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION CALENDAR, PAGE 12 ♦ CLASSIFIEDS, PAGE 10



Photo by Bonnie Hobbs

The aftermath of the fire at the Forest Glen Senior Apartments.



Photo Courtesy of Bill Smith

Firefighters battle the blaze at Forest Glen in Centreville.

Forest Glen Sustains \$10 Million Damage

Blaze races through 75 apartments, displaces 125 people.

By Bonnie Hobbs

A fire last Wednesday at the Forest Glen Senior Apartments in Centreville ravaged 75 units, displaced 125 residents and caused an estimated \$10,128,475 damage. Fire officials say the cause was an improperly discarded cigarette.

On May 2, around 12:46 p.m., units from Fairfax County Fire and Rescue were dispatched to the four-story Forest Glen complex on Woodmere Court in the Sully Station II community. Upon arrival, they discovered significant fire showing from a

third-floor balcony and extending to the fourth floor and attic area.

Firefighters helped several occupants escape the building while initiating efforts to extinguish the fire. A second alarm was immediately struck, bringing units from the City of Fairfax Fire Department, Loudoun County and Prince William County Fire and Rescue, and the Washington Metropolitan Airports Authority Fire and Rescue Department.

“We’ve never had a day like yesterday — so many fires at once,” said Fairfax County Battalion Chief Willie Bailey, standing in front of Forest Glen on Thursday afternoon, “And yesterday was Murphy’s Law — the first hot day [temperatures in the 90s] of the year.”

While he watched, a fire engine from Station 15 in Chantilly drove away. “One lady needed her medication to keep her alive, so the firefighters went in today to get it,”

Safe Cigarette Disposal

The Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department reminds smokers to never dispose of cigarette butts in potted, planting soil. When it gets too dry, the soil can become highly flammable. Never flick cigarettes into mulch or shrubbery; dispose of them in a suitable ashtray or bucket with sand. Ensure designated outside smoking areas have an appropriate fireproof container, ashtray or bucket. And completely douse butts and ashes with water before throwing them away, as they can smolder and cause a fire.

he said. Bailey said the fire began after someone improperly disposed of smoking materials on a third-floor balcony in the building at 14401 Woodmere Court.

“Fire was showing from the roof [when firefighters first reached the scene],” he said. “It took about two hours to put out because of the size of the fire. This was bigger than all those townhouses put together. Some of those apartments are totaled.”

From Forest Glen’s central courtyard on Thursday, smoke alarms could still be heard chirping from inside evacuated apartments. “Once the fire got up into the attic, it just ran the roofline,” said Lt. Sean Green, a Fire Department spokesman. “It then extended up and across to all three wings of this building.”

Although the fire-alarm system went off, it was delayed because the flames started on the building’s exterior. However, the fire sprinkler system inside the building did activate. Worried about a potential collapse in a section of the building, firefighters had to fight the blaze from outside. Four residents were transported to local hospitals with non-life-threatening injuries.

Forest Glen is comprised of several build-

ings, but Green said the fire was confined to just this one — although it tore through the entire structure. “People were concerned about their pets still inside, their medication and, of course, about being displaced,” he said.

Both the American Red Cross and Fairfax County’s Office of Emergency Management assisted them, as well as the townhouse fire victims. And a shelter was set up inside the Cub Run REC Center in Chantilly.

Anna Cecil, her daughter Tanya and their two cats lived on the first floor of Forest Glen and returned the following day to see if they could retrieve some of their belongings. “I just hope we can get our clothing, my jewelry and meds and a mattress out of there,” said Anna Cecil. “We’ve lived here four-and-a-half years and were just getting ready to sign our lease again; now, no way. There’s a big puddle of water in the kitchen and the lights fell down from the ceiling.”

Her son Wayne, with whom they’re now staying, said her floors were covered with 3 inches of water from the firehoses. He guessed those apartments would have to be “completely gutted” and would “probably take more than a year to rebuild.”

A Kindercare child-care center is right next to Forest Glen, and a female employee there said that, during the fire, “We were checking with the firefighters throughout the day, in case we had to evacuate. We were just glad the trees didn’t catch on fire. The firefighters were awesome; they did a great job.”

Also helping was Volunteer Fairfax, which is collecting gift-card donations for all the fire victims. [See “How To Help.”] Westfield High theater students did likewise during their Friday-Saturday, May 4-5, productions of “The Phantom of the Opera.” In addition, the Sully Station II Community Association began a Go Fund Me page for them on Facebook, in hopes of raising \$25,000.

How To Help

As the county continues to assist residents affected by the May 2 fires in Centreville, additional county-sponsored donation options are now available.

Western Fairfax Christian Ministries (WFCM) is now receiving both monetary donations and gift cards to support their operations to benefit the residents impacted by the May 2 fires. WFCM can receive donations from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday, and from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Tuesday and Thursday. WFCM is located at 4511 Daly Drive, Suite J, Chantilly. Speak with the person at the front desk regarding your donation.

In addition, Volunteer Fairfax continues to receive donations of generic gift

cards on behalf of the coordinating community-based organizations serving the residents. Denominations of \$20 or less are preferred.

Gift cards can be dropped off during normal business hours or mailed to their office at 10530 Page Ave, Fairfax, VA 22030. Alternatively, call Volunteer Fairfax at 703-246-3460 or email volsrus@volunteerfairfax.org to coordinate your gift. After hours, leave a message and someone will contact you to coordinate your donation.

People impacted by the Centreville fires may contact the county’s Coordinated Services Planning at 703-222-0880, TTY 711 for short-term or long-term needs.

‘That Thing Was Crazy – Like a Monster’

Fire burns 12 townhouses in Sully Station II.

By Bonnie Hobbs

Jose Salazar was at work in Rosslyn last Wednesday afternoon, May 2, when his daughter called from their Centreville townhouse and said, “The first house in our row is on fire.” Telling her to get out of their house immediately, he rushed to his parking garage to drive home.

When he reached his car, she called again to say the flames were almost on top of their roof. Believing help would be there soon, Salazar told her, “Don’t worry, there’s a fire station [Station 38] blocks away from our house.”

Little did they know, however, that those firefighters were among 90 from that station and others busy battling a three-alarm fire at the Forest Glen Senior Apartments, just two miles away. Hours later, when the smoke settled and the flames were all extinguished at both sites, 12 townhouses in Salazar’s Sully Station II neighborhood had been severely damaged, plus 75 apartments at Forest Glen.

The cause of the townhouse fires was still under investigation at press time, but damage is estimated at \$2,273,712. The conflagration at the apartment complex began around 12:46 p.m. and, about a half hour later, around 1:18 p.m., firefighters were also dispatched to the two-story, attached townhouses in the 5800 block of Watermark Circle and the 1400 block of Beaumeadow Drive.

With two, parallel rows of homes becoming heavily engulfed in flames^oand one structure collapsing, they, too, quickly became a three-alarm event requiring help from other jurisdictions. About 100 firefighters responded and, although one firefighter was injured, his wounds weren’t life-threatening.

“I’ve lived here a long time and I’ve never seen anything like this before,” said Watermark Circle’s Gina Ingraham, whose house is across the street from the destroyed townhouses. “It’s like a bad movie.” She was home when she heard a boom and looked outside.

“I saw a large, black funnel of smoke shooting straight up to the sky,” she said. “It was in back of the end townhouse at the corner of Watermark and Deer Lake Lane. People were pounding on that door, but no one was responding. I didn’t know if my house was going to survive, so I got my driver’s license, laptop and cellphone and ran out to move my car away from those townhouses.”

Ingraham also called 911 to report the fire. “But the line was busy, so I drove over to the fire station closest to our houses,” she said. “But they were already gone to the fire at Forest Glen. By the time I came



Photos by Bonnie Hobbs

Back view of the four destroyed townhouses on Watermark Circle next to Jose Salazar’s home (on right).



Flames and firefighters at the townhouses in Sully Station II.

back, 5 or 10 minutes later, the fire had consumed the end unit and was halfway to the next one. That thing was crazy – like a monster; it was rampant.”

Firefighters had also raced to her neighborhood by then. “They re-directed one Centreville unit here from Forest Glen because, at that time, they didn’t know the intensity of the fire here,” said Ingraham.

“There were also fire engines from Loudoun County, Manassas Park and Vienna.”

During the chaos, she discovered a young woman sitting under a tree on her side of the street, crying inconsolably. “I told her she had to move away from there and come with me because, with all the smoke, she couldn’t breathe,” said Ingraham. The woman was Andrea Salazar, who’d called



Photo Courtesy of Bill Smith

Jhonatan Zelaes points to the Fire Department evacuation notice on the townhouse basement he and his wife rented.

her dad Jose to tell him about the fire. The day after the blaze, she said, “Our basement is flooded and the back wall of our house is melted.”

“We have major water damage and smoke everywhere,” added her father. “We’re meeting with a restoration company to see what’s salvageable and what’s not.” Salazar and

See Fires, Page 9

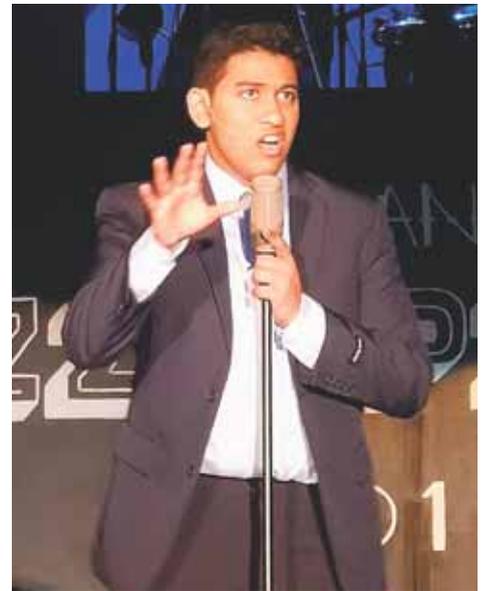
Songs with Spirit and Swagger

Chantilly High's 32nd annual Jazz & Pizzazz was May 4-5.

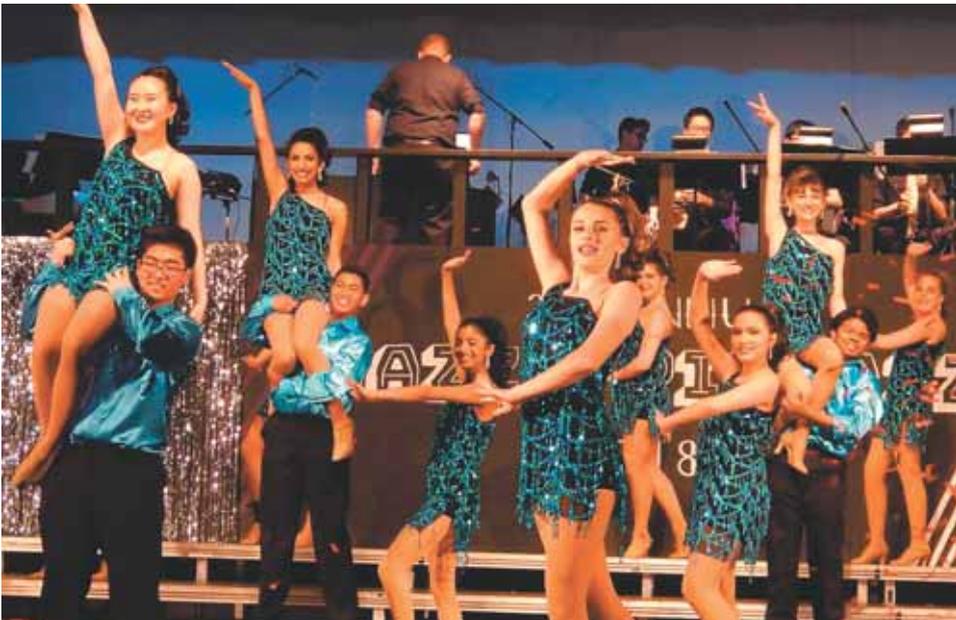


The ShowStoppers open the program with "Rhythm of the Night."

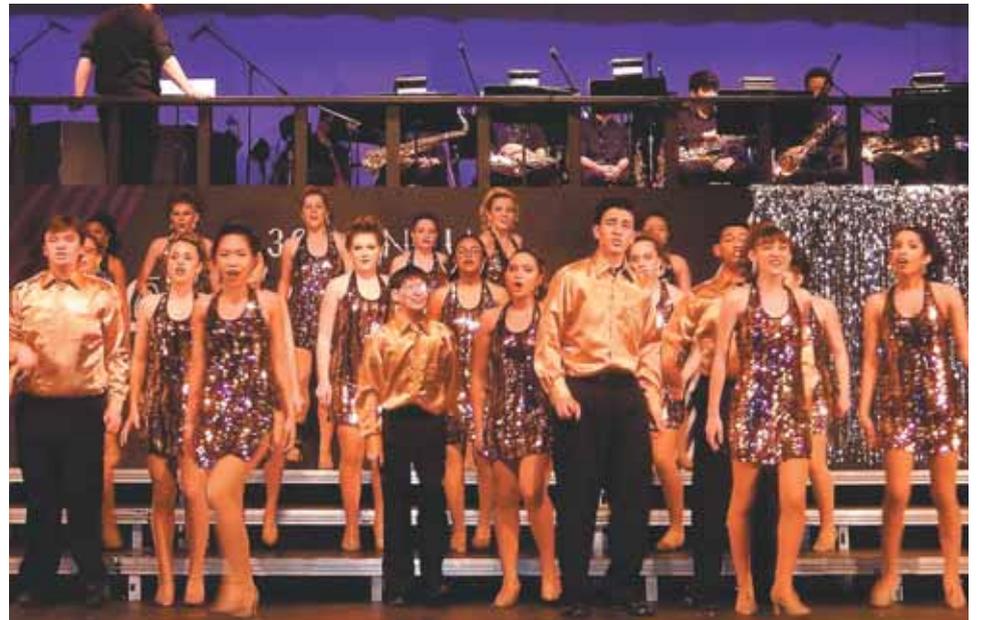
Photos by Bonnie Hobbs



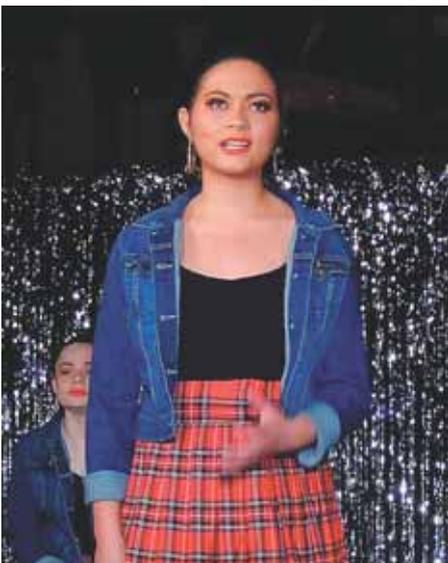
Suryanshu Kommoju sings "Superstition."



The ShowStoppers perform the finale, "Conga Rhythm."



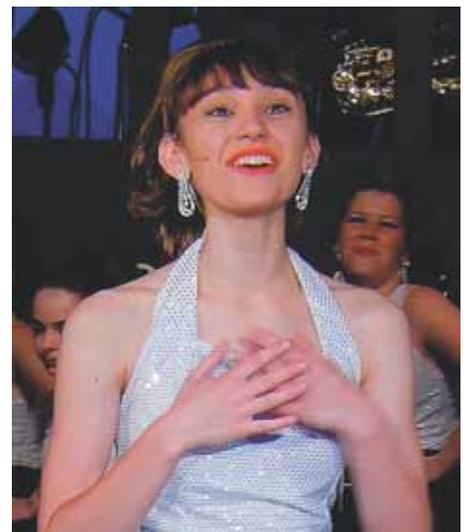
ShowStoppers sing "Total Eclipse of the Heart."



Elise McCue sings "Jolene."



A mash-up of "I Will Survive/Survivor."



Madeleine LeBeau sings "It Had to be You."

News



Graduating seniors sing "Big Time Rush."



Striking a pose after performing "We are Family."



Connor Green plays trombone during "Minuano."

Photos by Bonnie Hobbs



The boys do "Step by Step" by New Kids on the Block.



Vanessa Scola and Jun Ito sing "I Won't Give Up."



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- Sales Talent



STAYING SAFE TOGETHER

May 18 is Bike to Work Day. Here are some safety tips to remember.



- 

Sharrows indicate a shared lane for bicycles and cars. Slow down and watch for bicyclists. Motorists may cross the double yellow line to pass when it is safe to do so.
- 

Bike lanes give bicycles their own space, making it safer to pass. Do not drive or park in a bike lane.
- 

When turning right in a car, merge into the dashed bike lane and turn at the curb. Do not merge across solid bike lane.

Join us for the National Bike Challenge - May 1-31
Bike to Work Day - May 18
fairfaxcounty.gov/transportation/bike-walk



Opinion

Vote, Vote, Vote

Anyone who was closely watching last November's election got a demonstration about what difference one vote can make. Control of the Virginia General Assembly came down to a single race that was deemed to be tied, and was decided by a random drawing. Republicans won. Vote. It's so important to vote. Your vote could actually be the deciding vote.

Your best shot at ensuring you can vote is to vote early.

How To Vote

Every year is election year in Virginia; mechanics and details of voting require attention to detail.

Editorial

If you want to be sure you get to vote, voting early if you qualify is a good choice. Early voting, called absentee voting in person in Virginia, is already underway for the primary.

There are many valid reasons to vote absentee in Virginia, including working and commuting to and from home for 11 or more hours between 6 a.m. and 7 p.m. on Election Day. Check the Virginia Department of Elections list to see if you are eligible: elections.virginia.gov/casting-a-ballot/absentee-voting/index.html

There are two ways to vote absentee, in-person and by mail. To do either, you should first check your voter registration status to make sure it is up-to-date. Then you will need to apply for an absentee ballot. If you vote absentee in-person you will fill out the application when you arrive at the in-person absentee location.

Voting absentee by mail? You can now apply for an absentee ballot online with the state's new Citizen Portal. You will need your Social Security Number and information on your Virginia Driver's License to complete the application. Information is also provided on how to apply if you do not have a driver's license.

In Person Absentee Locations, Fairfax County

- ❖ Fairfax County Government Center
 - ❖ Franconia Governmental Center
 - ❖ Lorton Library
 - ❖ Mason Governmental Center
 - ❖ McLean Governmental Center
 - ❖ Mount Vernon Governmental Center
 - ❖ North County Governmental Center
 - ❖ Providence Community Center
 - ❖ Sully Governmental Center
 - ❖ West Springfield Governmental Center
- www.fairfaxcounty.gov/elections/absentee
703-222-0776 TTY 711

Letters to the Editor

Dug Out Shut Down

To the Editor:

The Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA) forced us to close the Dug Out on May 1, 2018, after 25 years of operation. We designed, constructed and operated the Dug Out using no public or FCPA funds.

Since opening, we have paid FCPA hundreds of thousands of dollars in rent, but more importantly, provided a recreational facility which FCPA was unable to provide. In our opinion, the FCPA will demolish this facility as they did our miniature golf course. Why? We do not understand.

See Letters, Page 11

voting@fairfaxcounty.gov
12000 Government Center Parkway Suite 323
Fairfax, VA 22035

Virginia Voter ID

Virginia has voter identification requirements; plan to bring photo identification with you to vote, whether that is absentee or on Primary Election Day.

Among accepted ID: valid Virginia Driver's License or Identification Card; valid Virginia DMV issued Veteran's ID card; valid U.S. Passport; other government-issued photo identification cards issued by the U.S. Government, the Commonwealth of Virginia, or a political subdivision of the Commonwealth; Tribal enrollment or other tribal ID issued by one of 11 tribes recognized by the Commonwealth of Virginia; valid college or university student photo identification card from an institution of higher education located in Virginia; valid student ID issued by a public school or private school in Virginia displaying a photo; employee identification card containing a photograph of the voter and issued by an employer of the voter in the ordinary course of the employer's business. Any registered voter who does not have one of the required forms of identification can apply for a free Virginia Voter Photo Identification from any general registrar's office in the Commonwealth. Voters applying for the Virginia Voter Photo ID complete the Virginia Voter Photo Identification Card Application, have their picture taken, and sign the digital signature pad. Once the application is processed, the card will be mailed directly to the voter.

A voter who does not bring an acceptable photo ID to the polls will be offered a provisional ballot.

Provisional Ballot Process for Voters Who Arrive Without Identification

If you arrive at your polling place on Election Day without an acceptable form of photo identification, don't panic or give up.

You will be given the opportunity to vote a provisional ballot. After completing the provisional ballot, the individual voting will be given written instructions from the election officials on how to submit a copy of his/her identification so that his/her vote can be counted.

A voter will have until noon on the Friday following the election to deliver a copy of the identification to the local electoral board or to appear in person to apply for a Virginia Voter Photo ID Card. Voters may submit a copy of

What's on the Ballot for Primary Election June 12?

DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY

US House of Representatives

District 10, Vote for One
Lindsey Davis Stover
Jennifer T. Wexton
Paul E. Pelletier
Alison K. Friedman
Dan I. Helmer
Julia E. Biggins

District 11, Gerald Edward Connolly (unopposed)

U.S. Senate, Timothy M. Kaine (unopposed)

REPUBLICAN PRIMARY

US House of Representatives
District 10 Vote for One
Shak E. Hill
Barbara J. Comstock

District 11, Jeff A. Dove, Jr. (unopposed)

United States Senate
Corey A. Stewart
Nick J. Freitas
E. W. Jackson

Primary: Tuesday, June 12

❖ Deadline to register to vote, or update an existing registration, for the Tuesday, June 12, General Election is Monday, May 21.

❖ Deadline to request an absentee ballot to be mailed to you is 5 p.m. Tuesday, June 5. Request must be received by your Registrar by 5 p.m.

❖ Deadline to request an absentee ballot by appearing in-person is 5 p.m. Saturday, June 9. Absentee in person voting is already underway.

their ID via fax, email, in-person submission, or through USPS or commercial delivery service. Please note that the copy of the ID must be delivered to the electoral board by noon on Friday, or the provisional ballot cannot be counted.

Also by noon on Friday following the election, the voter may appear in-person in the office of the general registrar, in the locality in which the provisional ballot was cast, and apply for a Virginia Voter Photo ID Card. At the completion of the application process, the voter may request a Temporary Identification Document. This document may be provided to the electoral board to meet the identification requirement.



The Dug Out batting cages at Braddock Park, 13451 Braddock Road, Clifton.

Chantilly CONNECTION

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A Connection Newspaper

A Mom in Charge Keeping the wheels turning at a local business.

By Ashley Claire Simpson

Americans have been celebrating Mother's Day for more than 100 years. Every May, moms are honored – from the women who gave birth to others who have made a difference in less traditional ways. Vienna mother of five Julie Holmes – the owner and president of Virginia Tire & Auto – is a “mom” to many as the matriarch of her growing family-owned business.

“Part of being a mom is always thinking about accountability,” Holmes said. “When you hold someone to a certain standard, which is what I do with both in business and as a mom, you do it because you care for them. You want them to be the best they can be. We have a Virginia Tire & Auto way of doing things, and our associates in all the stores are held to that standard. We want them to have a rewarding careers; we care about everyone and want them to advance. In turn, our customers have rewarding experiences with us, too.”

For Holmes, Virginia Tire & Auto has always been more than an automotive services provider.

“My parents, Myron and Carole Boncarosky, started Virginia Tire & Auto in 1976, and it has always played a very positive role in my life because when I was a child, my parents always spoke very positively about the business,” said Holmes, the only child of the local business's founders. “They always looked at it as a gift, and not a burden, to offer a livelihood to all employees, offering the kinds of services that everyone needs. It was always part of our dinnertime conversation, rehashing the events of every day. That's how it is in our family now. There is nothing else I'd rather be doing. My five children today hear about it and they are getting a similar positive impression.”

Holmes and her husband, Mike, took over the business in 2014, which now includes 13 shops throughout Northern Virginia.

“Things remain really good, and we've also seen a lot of positive change,” Holmes said. “Since my husband and I took over we have worked on growing the business. We've also formalized the core values of being professional, attentive, genuine and forward-thinking. We're making sure we are making all day-to-day business decisions with these values at the forefront of our minds.”



The Holmes family.

She was already the mother of three children when she took on the role of president. She has since added two more children, all the while developing a corporate family with hundreds of employees.

“I am an only child, which is another crazy angle to the trajectory of my life and this business,” she said. “I had a wonderful childhood with just my parents but now I have four girls and one boy. Still, we've changed a lot in the business over the last few years. We've strengthened development in our own employees so that they can best serve our clients with an element of trust and honesty you don't always find in our industry. Let's face it: this industry doesn't always have the best reputation. We differentiate ourselves by having highly-trained, really good people.”

Holmes added that several other female leaders at Virginia Tire & Auto have been integral in realizing this kind of investment in people.

“We hired a director of talent develop-

ment, Cindy Weinberg, who is also a mom,” Holmes said. “We've worked hard to form a leadership team that is very focused on organizational health, and with this team, we've been able to establish clarity around our values. It's all about continuing to protect the gem we were given.”

Sarah Price, Virginia Tire & Auto's training manager, is a single mother and long-time automotive professional. “I have worked in the automotive field for 20 years now,” she said. “This industry is typically very demanding. The other shops that I have worked for expect you to give all your time to them. Most of my career, I have worked in the shop on the vehicles. It's still very male-dominated and there is not much empathy for single moms. That is not the case with Virginia Tire & Auto.”

Kris Crouch, Virginia Tire & Auto controller, has also watched the business transform into a community force.

“I think being here for 29 years speaks volumes about growth opportunities and

culture,” Crouch said. “I have spent my whole career here because it's been so beneficial for me, both personally and professionally. Julie places such a high value on the importance of all of those relationships, she is understanding when any of us need to be present at special events and milestones for our children or other family members.” Holmes said, “Work-life balance is important not only for the obvious personal reasons but also to recharge and be the best you can be professionally. The small family culture that exists at each of our locations is genuine. We spend many hours together and develop strong bonds with our co-workers. We celebrate their successes and support them through their darkest times. I have met some of the most influential people in my life through my time here.”

There is also more tangible evidence of a mom in charge.

“There is a child play area in the waiting rooms in all our stores,” Holmes said. “Also, as a mom, time is my most valuable asset, and I know that's the case for everyone we deal with. I know what it's like to be treated well and have your time valued. We want to make sure we have loaner cars and shuttle services. When say we are going to have a car done by a certain time, we make sure to have it done by that specified hour. We've also gotten behind a huge initiative locally, providing free monthly free car seat clinics. We pay for any of our associates to get certified to install car seats. People can come to any of our stores at no cost to make sure their children's seats are installed correctly. This is very near and dear to my heart as a mom. We have people technologically savvy and trained to greatly enhance a child's chances of surviving a car accident.”

Virginia Tire & Auto, which is opening three new locations in the next year, is a place that she hopes to call “home” for generations to come.

“I've worked around the business since high school,” Holmes said. “It's where I learned from my dad that, if there's time to lean, then there's time to clean. Then I went to law school, clerked for a judge on the U.S. Federal Court of Appeals and then practiced corporate law. Then, I came into the business after my second child was born, overseeing marketing. I've since worn other hats. It's demanding, but it just doesn't feel like work. I would love for one of my children to have passion for the business and want to take it to the next level.”

Bulletin Board

SATURDAY/MAY 12

Church Yard Sales. 8 a.m.-1 p.m. at Oakton Baptist Church of Chantilly, 14001 Sullyfield Circle, Chantilly. Members of Oakton Baptist Church of Chantilly will be having individual Yard Sales in the church parking lot. Rain date is May 19. Call 703-631-1799.

MONDAY/MAY 14

Best Fit Colleges. 7 p.m. at Chantilly High School - Auditorium, 4201

Stringfellow Road, Chantilly. Advice on the college application and admissions process from Rob Franek, editor-in-chief at The Princeton Review. Tips for creating a career path. An interview with a local leader about how they found their best fit college and career. A tour of a green RV from Roadtrip Nation's public television show. Reach out to your school counselor or Mrs. Rivera Compher at immalavecomp@fcps.edu with any questions. Visit goo.gl/xAwgrK.

THURSDAY/MAY 17

Safe Driving While Aging. 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. at Lord of Life Lutheran Church, 13421 Twin Lakes Drive, Clifton. NV Rides will host workshops offering tips and best practices to help older drivers stay on the road safely, and for as long as possible. Free. RSVP requested at Ginac@nvrives.org or 703 537-3070.

SUNDAY/MAY 20

Young Women Leadership

Program. U.S. Rep. Barbara Comstock R-10) is accepting applications for the summer 2018 session of the 10th Congressional District Young Women Leadership Program. The deadline to apply is Sunday, May 20. Call 202-225-5136 or visit comstock.house.gov.

REVIVE! Training. 3 p.m. at 4213 Walney Road, Chantilly. REVIVE! trains individuals on what to do and not do in an overdose situation, how to administer naloxone, and what to do afterwards. Advance registration required at 703 502-7021 or 703

502-7016.

TUESDAY/MAY 22

Primary Candidate Forum. 6-7:30 p.m. at Chantilly High School Auditorium, 4201 Stringfellow Road, Chantilly. Free. Last chance to hear from all six Democratic candidates for the 10th Congressional District before the June 12 primary vote. Robert McCartney, Senior Regional Correspondence and Associate Editor for the Washington Post, will be the moderator. Visit www.sullydemocrats.org.

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HomeLifeStyle

Ready for Summer

Time to dust-off and spruce up patios for a season of al fresco entertaining.

By Marilyn Campbell

When designing the patio of her McLean home, interior design professor Jean Freeman of Marymount University, relied on the natural surroundings to create a backdrop for her outdoor oasis.

"I have an area in the backyard that has small stones and lounge furniture," she said. "Our backyard is next to Pimmit Run Trail and has lots of trees, some of which I planted. Also, I planted several holly trees so that the area would attract more birds and sometimes the bird chirping gets quite loud and wonderful."

Gentle breezes and mild temperatures are some of the pleasures of spring that beckon many outdoors for parties and family dinners, but turning a winter-worn patio into a space for entertaining can feel daunting. Breathing new life into a landscape dulled by snow and frost or creating an entirely new outdoor space might be easier than it appears.

When considering a patio furniture purchase, avoid the battle against Mother Nature by selecting pieces that can stand up to the elements. "The number one rule in furnishing your patio is to purchase quality furniture," said Anne Walker of Anne Walker Design LLC. "There are a lot of outdoor furnishings that look alike, but they are not all the same. Dedon, based in Germany and Janus et Cie, based in California, make excellent outdoor furnishings that will stand the test of time ... [and] will not fade, warp or degrade even if left outdoors in the elements for years.

Less expensive look-alikes will fall apart after just a few years or months of exposure to the elements, continued Walker. "I can't stress it enough: invest in high-quality outdoor furnishings or you will just be throwing your money away. Buy the best you can afford, and work little by little if need be to complete your outdoor space. You won't be sorry."

When choosing fabrics for that furniture, Todd Martz, co-owner of Home on Cameron in Old Town Alexandria, says, "Accessories like pillows and draperies as well as chairs, sofas and rugs are all available in low maintenance fabrics."

Selecting smaller, easy-to-move pieces of furniture over large sectionals will produce a design plan with versatility. "You'll be happy to have the flexibility to move things around when you entertain or when the sun shifts and you want to get into or away from the direct sun," said Walker.



Photo courtesy of Anne Walker

One design technique that Anne Walker has incorporated into the design of her own patio is choosing smaller, moveable pieces of furniture — like these Dedon Barcelona lounge chairs — over large sectionals to allow for a versatile design plan.

Incorporating potted plants into the landscape design offers versatility. "Mix several sized plants ... very large as well as different types of plants in smaller planters," added Kelley Proxmire of Kelley Proxmire, Inc. "Vary the textures as well as the color of green leaves such as ferns, palms and flowering plants."

Use planters to create architectural features like walls and borders. "The plants will add beautiful visual interest, and the planters are moveable, allowing flexibility in use and design," said Walker.

For those who want to build a stone patio, go for variety, but establish a solid base to avoid costly repairs later. "Combinations of flagstone and brick are elegant and more interesting than use of only one type of materials," said Walker. "Make sure you have a professional set your patio in concrete. It's much less expensive to set the stone in stone dust, but within a year or less the stones will begin to shift and weeds will grow through the gaps."

Lighting matters, says Proxmire, and she suggest that when designing or even sprucing up patio, "Use different sources of light [such as] inside-outdoor lamps, different sizes of lanterns, candlesticks with glass hurricanes," she said. "The candles with batteries are great for using outside because the wind isn't an issue."

Now that summer is on the horizon, Walker has a plan for getting her patio guest-ready. "I will power wash with my personal home power washer, plant a few flowers and boom! Ready to entertain," she said. "We love to entertain on our patio. It's our favorite space."



Photos by Stacy Zarlin Goldberg

Kelley Proxmire suggests using plants and planters in a variety of sizes — such as these blue and white ceramic pots to create a light and airy patio space.



Todd Martz of Home on Cameron designed this patio and says that exterior spaces can be treated like an indoor room by using bright, fresh fabrics designed specifically for outdoors.

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Fires

From Page 3

his wife have owned their home seven years and, for the time being, they're staying in a hotel in Fairfax City. Still, he said, "Out of the 10 townhouses in our section, ours is the only one with a roof. It's a miracle."

David Lee, of RAM Construction, was among the insurance-company and home-restoration representatives on the scene Thursday. Standing in front of four sets of front steps leading to no-longer-there houses on Watermark Circle, he said, "We were called in yesterday by the insurance company for one of these homes before it collapsed. We were going to board it up and secure the property."

But, he explained, "With all the devastation – and the fact that the fire kept rekindling – last night the fire department knocked down the buildings. It was smart, because of safety; you don't want them to fall down and hurt people. I've seen five homes burn together before, but nothing like this – never this magnitude. It was like a tornado ripped through the neighborhood – but this is worse."

Solomon Shin lived next door to the Salazars for almost a year, and his house was one of those four that no longer exist. "There's nothing left," he said. "I lived in the basement of the owners' house and was home at the time of the fire. I always hear footsteps and noise upstairs, so when I heard them around 1 p.m., I didn't think anything of it."

"I was about to take a shower and saw lights flickering in my room. A minute later, I smelled something burning, so I went out the back door and the fence was on fire. And with the wind, I couldn't go out that way. So I grabbed my computer, cellphone, car keys and wallet – and whatever paper files I could – and shoved them in my backpack. Then I ran upstairs and, luckily, the front door wasn't on fire, yet, so I went out that way."

Also renting a basement, in a Beaumeadow Drive townhouse directly behind the Salazars, was Jhonatan Zelaes. His



Photos by Bonnie Hobbs

Building inspectors, residents and home-reconstruction personnel in front of some of the destroyed townhouses; all that remains are the front steps.

wife is a professional makeup artist who ran her business from home and was there at the time with a client. "Our landlord was bringing in clothing drying on her deck, saw the fire and told my wife," said Zelaes. "My wife then saved our two dogs and bearded dragon."

He was working in Manassas when his wife called him about the fire, so he rushed home. "There was a bunch of smoke, fire was showing and the fire department hadn't gotten here when I arrived around 1:45 p.m.," he said. "Now everything is wet and under water because of the firehoses. Everything is destroyed – my computer, tax papers, all our furniture. We didn't have rental insurance because we only planned to be here six months, and we were here a year. At least we're alive."

Bang Nguyen owns a townhouse on Watermark, across from the Salazars. His nanny and son were home when the fire began, and he raced home after she called him about it. He arrived around 2:20 p.m. and, he said Thursday, "The whole thing was burning. It was really bad and I was

afraid it would spread [across the street]. It sucks; I feel terrible for all the people here. Yesterday was a crazy day. The firefighters kept spraying water until 4 a.m. today."

Fairfax County Fire and Rescue says some 36 people were displaced, but that number doesn't include those renting in the basements. "It's a shame – a lot of people are homeless now," said Fire Department spokesman Bill Delaney. "But our crews did unbelievable work. And the fact that no one perished and there were no significant injuries is phenomenal."

As for Jose Salazar, even though his daughter had alerted him to the blaze, he still wasn't prepared for what he saw when he got home. "I was shocked to see the homes behind and beside us engulfed in flames," he said. "The entire row was flattened, except for us. We were blessed by the grace of God."

Noting that the firefighters "came from all over – Arlington, Burke, Loudoun," he said, "They reassured me that everything was going to be all right. I was so impressed; they were amazing. They were still fight-

ing the fire, and we had some important documents inside our house. So I spoke to the fire chief, and he let five firefighters go in and get them. They even went in a second time to get my [barefoot] daughter some shoes to wear."

Salazar also praised his neighbors. "It was wonderful how the community came together," he said. "They offered their basements for people to stay in." And at the shelter set up at the Cub Run REC Center for the fire victims, said Salazar, "People brought in water, pizza and snacks. One neighbor even handed out \$50 gift cards to every family."

"What's really sad is that some of our neighbors whose homes burned didn't have rental insurance and they lost everything," he continued. "And one neighbor lost a dog, and that was sad, too." Regarding his own house, said Salazar, "This is just one of life's curveballs, so you've got to take it one day at a time." Then, pointing to his wife and daughter, he said, "I've got my precious valuables right here. Everything else is replaceable."



These burned townhouses on Beaumeadow Drive now resemble a war zone.



The brick wall and basement of the first townhome that caught on fire.

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Entertainment

SATURDAY/MAY 12

Liberty Vendor Fair. 11 a.m.-4 p.m. at Liberty Middle School, 6801 Union Mill Road, Clifton. Liberty Middle School PTA will hold a vendor fair fundraiser with a large variety of vendors, activities, and food items. Enjoy food, fun, and music. Admission is free. Email sean.david.foster@gmail.com.

Fundraiser and Book Fair. At Barnes and Noble Store, 12193 Fair Lakes Promenade Drive, Fairfax. The Fairfax Station Railroad Museum volunteers will introduce visitors to life in Fairfax Country during the 1800s. Local authors will sign books available for sale. The Museum will receive a percentage of sales for most purchases. Visit www.fairfax-station.org, or www.facebook.com/FFXSRR. Call 703-425-9225.

SATURDAY-FRIDAY/MAY 12-18

Holistic Wellbeing. At Sant Mirankari Mission, 4501 Pleasant Valley Road, Chantilly. Free. Swami Mukundananda is the founder of JKYog also known as Yoga for Body, Mind and Soul. Part one covers the following five Healthy sciences: Yoga, Pranayam, Subtle Body Relaxation, Roop Dhyam Meditation and Science of Healthy Diet. Part Two are discourses on the Topic - 7 Mindsets for Success in Life and Beyond. The schedule is as follows: 05/12 - 05/13 (Sat.-Sun.) Yoga & Meditation: 4:30-5:45 p.m.; Discourses: 5:45-7:30 p.m.; 05/14 - 05/17 (Mon.-Thurs.) Yoga & Meditation: 6-7:15 p.m.; Discourses: 7:15-9 p.m.; 05/18 (Friday) Life Transformational Workshop from 6-9 p.m. Free vegetarian dinner provided every day. Contact 703-901-3731 or visit the website: <https://www.jkyog.org/>

events/7-Mindsets-Chantilly-VA-2018/

SUNDAY/MAY 13

Model Train Show & Mother's Day Celebration. 1-4 p.m. at Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. The Northern Virginia NTRAK members will hold an N gauge T-TRAK model train show at the museum. Moms receive a special gift. Museum members and moms, free; adults 16 and over, \$4; children 5-15, \$2; under 4, free. Visit www.fairfax-station.org, www.facebook.com/FFXSRR or call 703-425-9225.

MONDAY/MAY 14

Interactive African Drumming Class. Noon-1 p.m. at Sully Senior Center, 14426 Albemarle Point Place, Chantilly. During the 2018 Creative Aging Festival senior centers throughout the county will be hosting demonstrations, performances, and interactive classes involving writing, drawing, painting, crafting, music, and dance. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/neighborhood-community-services/news/creative-aging-festival.

What's Lurking in Local Waterways. 6-7 p.m. at Ellanor C. Lawrence Park, 5040 Walney Road, Chantilly. Freshwater ecosystems are full of fascinating creatures. Learn about critters such as stoneflies, hellgrammites, water pennies and crayfish as participants search for them at Ellanor C. Lawrence Park. Explore Big Rocky Run with a naturalist. Use dip nets and kick nets to catch and release freshwater creatures and discover their role in the environment. For participants age

4 to adult. \$6 per person. Wear shoes that can get wet. Meet at the pond. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/eclawrence.

TUESDAY/MAY 15

The Eddie Cantor Story. 1-3 p.m. at Congregation Beth Emeth, 12523 Lawyers Road, Herndon. "The Eddie Cantor Story: A Jewish Life in Performance and Politics." Historian David Weinstein will share a multimedia presentation featuring many rare photos, songs, and film clips. Free. Visit bethemeth.org/hazak.

WEDNESDAY/MAY 16

Cub Scout Carnival. 7-8 p.m. at Union Mill Elementary School, 13611 Springstone Drive, Clifton. Games, prizes, and fun. Pack 1860 invites boy and now girls (K-5th grades) and their families for a fun evening at a scout-run carnival. Come learn about Cub Scouts - now open to boys and girls. Free. Email akela@pack1860.org for more.

FRIDAY/MAY 18

Bike to Work Day. Join more than 18,000 area commuters for a free celebration of bicycling as a fun, healthy and environmentally-friendly way to get to work. To register, visit www.biketoworkmetrodc.org and be entered for a free bike raffle.

46th Annual Clifton Homes Tour. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Guided tours of four Clifton homes and a silent auction at Clifton Presbyterian Church. Tour tickets: \$25-30, Free admission to silent auction. Meets at Clifton Presbyterian Church, 12748 Richards Lane, Clifton. Visit www.cliftoncwc.org.

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Letters

From Page 6

Five years ago, they forced us to close Islands In The Park. During that closure FCPA spent in excess of \$180,000 with a nationally recognized law firm to oust us. Last year they spent approximately \$170,000 in removing the facility. We have had thousands of patrons come to us and ask why? We do not understand.

In closing the Dug Out, the FCPA invoked a Lease provision which states, "FCPA reserves the right to terminate this agreement if in the best interest of the FCPA and the residents of Fairfax County..." I do not believe they have grounds for termination and do not agree that it is in the best interest of the residents of Fairfax County. Our patrons love us. Many people provided us with statements which confirmed that closure was not in their best interests.

If you believe it is not in your best interests to see this facility closed and razed, you may consider contacting Supervisor Pat Herrity, or the Executive Director of the FCPA, Kirk Kincannon. Their contact information is:

Supervisor Pat Herrity,
Springfield District
6140 Rolling Road
Springfield, VA 22152
springfield@fairfaxcounty.gov
703-963-1715
Mr. Kirk Kincannon
Executive Director
FCPA
12055 Government Center Parkway, Suite 927
Fairfax, VA 22035
kirk.kincannon@fairfaxcounty.gov
703-324-0702

Supervisor Herrity appoints a Park Authority board member for Springfield District. His name is Michael W. Thompson, Jr. Mr. Thompson has not returned any of our attempts to contact him concerning this or other matters.

In summary, of the past 25 years, we have enjoyed serving the hundreds of thousands of Fairfax County's residents. We had one of the best batting cage facilities in the nation.

Thank you for your support.

**Bernard C. Voyten,
Jr., PE, Leed AP
President**

Write

The deadline for all material is noon Friday.

Letters must be signed.
Include home address and home and business numbers.
Letters are routinely edited for libel, grammar, good taste and factual errors.

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Still Haven't Seen the Light



By **KENNETH B. LOURIE**

Wow!. I just saved "Up to \$504 **" (not including the two asterisks), and all I did was buy a six pack of LED light bulbs. So it says on the package anyway.

Maybe I should buy another six-pack and save even more money? There are only two problems (just two?) with this plan. First, I don't see a rebate-type form to complete and return and; in lieu there of, neither is there a guarantee, considering my health situation, that I'll even live long enough ("Lasts 13+ Years") to realize the benefit/savings of not spending additional money on light bulbs. (Are they even called light bulbs any more? I don't see it printed on the package anywhere.)

And while I'll definitely enjoy not spending money on light bulbs - or whatever they're called, I won't enjoy wondering if I've now spent money on light bulbs that I don't actually need and/or likely will never even use. I mean, I have previously - because as a country/consumer we've had no other choice, given that the incandescent light bulb ship has sailed - bought replacement light bulbs. I don't remember however, if the bulbs were LED, Halogen, Incandescent, CFL, Fluorescent or who knows what? Literally. Certainly not me.

My only light-bulb-related talent is screwing them into the fixture as I've written about previously. (Do you remember I called myself "Taurus Bulba"?) In fact, I may very well have already installed light bulbs that are going to last for years so it's possible there isn't even a need to allocate dollars and sense to bulb inventory - or even to write this column.

I suppose that if I'm serious and/or inclined to shine a light on this problem, I need to get organized, either on my computer or in pen in a notebook (Sort of like how my wife's Italian grandfather, Cesare, did regarding Christmas cards. He had years of notebooks with names listed with boxes alongside, checked or not, for cards sent and/or received) to identify which lights/fixtures have which kind of light bulbs so I'll know whether it's likely I'll actually need to spend money on replacement light bulbs.

If the light bulbs really are going to "Last 13+ years," (as is also printed on the package) then I might not need to buy them any more, for awhile, anyway. As a result, light bulbs will no longer be a regular purchase like toilet paper, paper towels, laundry detergent, etc. Instead, they will become an irregular purchase like batteries, sponges and the like.

Now, if I really can stop this unnecessary light-bulb-redundancy, I should have a few extra dollars that I can allocate elsewhere on real necessities - like candy, cookies and ice cream.

Having sorted out the light bulb task ahead of me; in addition to saving money, I will have saved time as well. And who wouldn't want to save time and money? Everybody. However, saving it in this excruciatingly boring/mundane manner has limited appeal, I would guess.

But, we're not just saving pennies here; potentially, according to the light bulb's packaging, we are apparently saving hundreds of dollars, and hundreds are worth saving.

Unfortunately, the dollars saved are not exactly in-pocket. They're more dollars which won't be spent out-of-pocket. Not as direct as a rebate, but more like an indirect benefit such as money saved from the installation of energy-efficient windows or placing insulation in your attic.

Either way, it's money not in somebody else's pocket. I just wish the manufacturers could figure out a way to pay me today, especially since I paid them yesterday.

Kenny Lourie is an Advertising Representative for The Potomac Almanac & The Connection Newspapers.

A Day to Remember

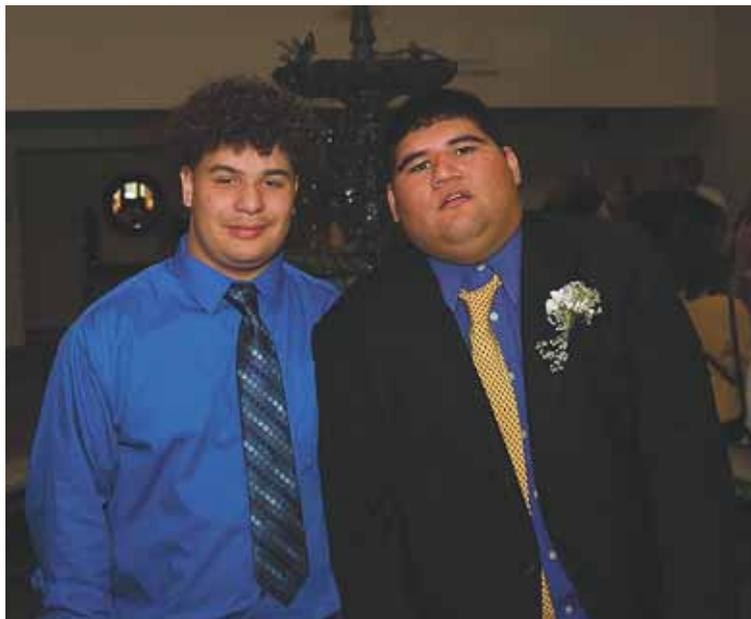
Day Prom 2018, a Day to Remember for special education students from Annandale, Chantilly, Herndon, Lake Braddock, Oakton, Robinson, West Springfield, Westfield, and Woodson high schools took place on May 1 at the Waterford at Fair Oaks in Fairfax. Day Prom has grown substantially since it began 17 years ago and now includes two separate events to accommodate all those interested in attending.



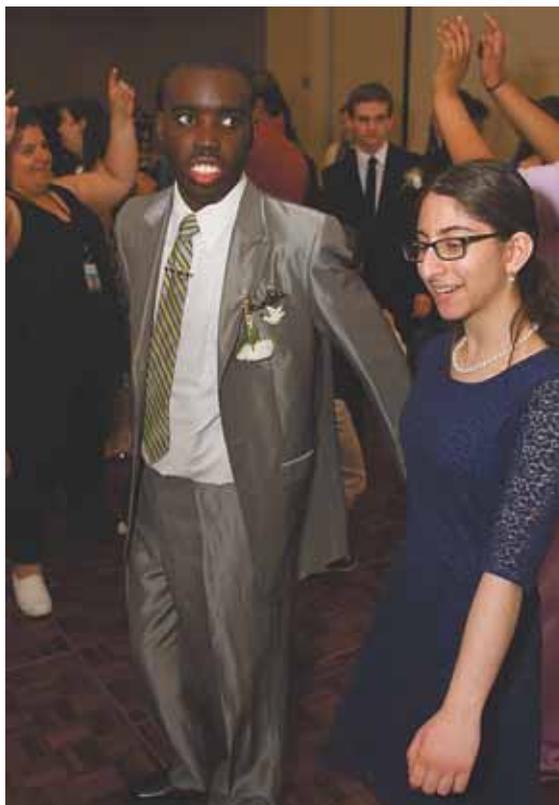
Chantilly senior Shantell Martin smiles as her corsage is pinned.



Chantilly students and staff have their photo taken with Chantilly Principal Dr. Scott Poole (back right).



Westfield students (from left): Freshman Jake Murphy-Garcia and junior Ivan Tejada relax in the lobby as Day Prom concludes.



Westfield students Caleb Hayes, senior, and Zoe Greenberg, junior, have fun on the dance floor.



Luke Arnold from Lake Braddock and Westfield senior Ayana Coran enjoy dancing together.



The dance floor is packed with students.



Peer buddy Mary Allison and Ian Lynn, both juniors at Westfield, take time out from dancing for a photo.

Photos by Tom Manning